



BREMERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



Chief Strachan's Weekly Update

Back on July 1st we sent out a tweet with the photos below of a suspect in the theft of credit cards and cash from lockers at the YWCA. The man pictured is now in jail and the car is in our evidence garage after Officer Spencer Berntsen did some great work to help clear a number of cases. The man was taken into custody on a call of someone using a fraudulent card, and Spencer connected him to our case several weeks back. The 35 year old man, from Eatonville, is suspected in a number of thefts from lockers at gyms in Gig Harbor and all around the area.



[Click here](#) for the press release from the July 22 arrest of a man, who was a Level 3 Sex Offender, who attempted to assault two young women in a park in East Bremerton. The press release, and the follow up coverage in the media, highlighted a problem that the Mayor, Council and I have all been bringing up for some time - a concentration of offenders placed in rental housing by the Dept. of Corrections. We actively check on compliance for all registered sex offenders, but I am pleased that the issue is getting some attention. Great work by the two young women to call 911 and get us a good description, and very good work by our officers to respond very quickly and get the suspect into custody within minutes. The man is being held on \$500,000 bail. [Click here](#) for the KIRO 7 news story.

As we continue to raise awareness of police credibility and concerns in the community at a national level, here is a story to remind you that there are too many people who may try to use this constructive dialogue to their own advantage. On Saturday, officers were on bike patrol in Evergreen Park when they contacted four juveniles in a car in possession of marijuana. One female gave her identification to the officers, but a young man in the front passenger seat did not want to give his name and was acting as if he was going to run from the car. He also provided false names to the officers, and when they asked him to step out of the car and tried to take him into custody, he immediately became very aggressive and started to actively resist. Assisting officers told him repeatedly that we did not want to fight with him. During the struggle, he was taken to the ground,

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Headquarters

and during the interaction one officer was struck in the throat. The young man was finally taken into custody, and he was not injured. He went to Juvenile Detention on several charges, including an outstanding arrest warrant from the court. As all of this was in Evergreen Park, several people stated they were filming the issue on their cell phones, because the officers were white and the young man was black. This has become almost routine in officer contacts. The young man did not know his mother's phone number, so the girl in the car announced she would "Facebook" his mother. A short time later the mother called and wanted to know why her son had been "bloodied up" and taken to juvenile detention. The officer explained what had occurred and that her son was not injured. The mother realized her son's friend was trying to create an issue that was not there. She stated her son should not be with the other kids in the first place, and she had been working with probation officers to get him on the right track. The officer and the mom had a good talk and realized they both wanted to get the young man back on the right path.

On Sunday afternoon, a 31 year old man stole a \$125 tool from an auto parts store on Kitsap Way. The employee followed the man outside and asked the man to stop and give him the tool back, but the man refused and drove away. The employee wrote down the license plate and provided a good description of the suspect. The car was stopped by our officers as it got to the man's house. The man was arrested, but not before officers ensured that he would not be taken into custody in front of his children. The tool was returned and the case will be forwarded to the prosecutor.

I have known many officers who have said they have been contacted by people they arrested years ago for DUI, telling them that the arrest saved the person's life because it caused them to change their destructive lifestyle. This week we had an even more direct example of a DUI arrest saving a life. A motorcyclist crashed on 19h Street at Taft Avenue. A helpful passerby picked up the motorcycle and tried to help the rider, noting that the man was extremely intoxicated and had suffered some visible injuries. The motorcyclist's response to this kindness was to fight with the Good Samaritan and to try to drive the motorcycle away, apparently to avoid being arrested for DUI. When officers arrived and asked the man how much alcohol he had consumed, the man replied, "4, 5, 6, 8, no...10 beers." The man was transported for treatment at the hospital, where they determined he had life-threatening internal injuries. If he would have successfully left the scene and went to his house, which was only about a block away from the crash, it could have had very tragic results.

Speaking of DUIs, Officer Derek Ejde made a routine traffic stop in Manette on Wednesday, and discovered that the (very obnoxious) driver was intoxicated. The driver was good enough to enlighten officers as to how to do our jobs before being taken into custody. He also pointed out that Officer Ejde stuttered while reading Miranda, which he said "invalidates the arrest". The on-duty Sergeant, Ryan Heffernan, has a law degree from Rutgers and he advised he would be looking into the case law on that legal argument. The man tested at a .14 and was booked into the jail.

A man with serious mental health problems wielding a large, "Rambo" style knife, in a crowd of people with the police on the way. This is the start of too many "viral"

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videos where social media plays up the incident when it goes very badly and deadly force is used. However, this scenario was just this week here in our city, and it happens frequently in every city. Early in the morning on Wednesday, officers were called to the area of Park and 6th, near all of the social service agencies, on a report of a man with a large knife, threatening to harm himself. Officers located the man in the parking lot, with several people gathered around. Witnesses described the man acting irrationally. Officers handled the incident peacefully, took the knife from the man, and as we often say, he "was detained without incident and taken to the hospital for evaluation." And, as we often also say, "a few hours later we were called back to the same place again, for the same person." The man had been quickly released from the hospital and was back out on the street, this time yelling about his "finance", apparently meaning "fiancé". The knife had been taken earlier so he didn't have it this time. There is no mechanism to keep this man off the street, so we just keep dealing with him.

Finally, you may have seen in the paper that we had two separate protests in our city last week regarding support for raising awareness of Black Lives Matter and other issues related to police and community trust. The second protest, on Sunday, was on 11th and Warren. It was peaceful and officers reported no problems. The earlier protest was last Thursday, and organizers held it in front of our building and in the front parking lot. They had been very helpful in letting us know about the event and we assisted with parking and logistics. I checked in with the organizers a few times during the evening, and everyone was peaceful and cooperative, wishing only to express their opinion and exercise their Constitutional rights, and as Pierce County Sheriff Paul Pastor has said, "Protecting rights is our job description." Some kids that came with the group were playing in the plaza in front of the building, and everyone was respectful. Toward the end of the event, the organizers were putting things away in cars and getting ready to leave when I went out to check in. Everyone thanked us for our assistance, and I thanked them for a peaceful event. Just at that time, a young African American man walked up with a box, and asked if I could give it to our officers. He had gone to a local store and gotten donuts for the officers, and wanted us to know that every contact he had ever had with Bremerton officers had been professional and respectful. The timing was pretty amazing, but the reaction of the protesters was gratifying. They said that it did not surprise them, and they appreciate the work that we do and thanked us for our service. I am proud of our officers and proud of our community. Another good reminder that supporting the protests or any of the discussion is not about us versus them, it's about having a thoughtful dialogue.

Work Hard - Have Fun - Stay Safe

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